Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

On World Ozone Day, India's Cooling Action Plan gets UN applaud

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At an event to mark the World Ozone Day 2019 in New Delhi, Union Minister of State (MoS) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Babul Supriyo said that the World Ozone Day offers an opportunity to focus global attention and action on the vital environmental issue of protection of the stratospheric ozone Layer.

Shri Babul Supriyo highlighted the fact that India became one of the first countries in the world to launch a comprehensive Cooling Action plan in March, 2019, which has a long term vision to address the cooling requirement across sectors such as residential and commercial buildings, cold-chain, refrigeration, transport and industries. The India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP) lists out actions which can help reduce the cooling demand, which will also help in reducing both direct and indirect emissions.

The Minister also underlined that the importance of development of National Cooling Action Plans has been recognized by the United Nations Secretary General, Mr António Guterres in his message on World Ozone day 2019 where the need for all countries to develop national cooling action plans has been highlighted. "It is heartening to note that a step taken by India has led to a global recognition of this important policy initiative which can help in climate action and achievement of sustainable development goals.", said the MoS

He pointed out that the ICAP has been appreciated internationally as an important policy initiative which has the potential to provide socio-economic and environmental benefits related to reduced refrigerant use, climate change mitigation and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many countries are now involved in development of cooling action plans keeping in view the significant environmental benefits and the fulfillment of Sustainable Development Goals.

The India Cooling Action seeks to (i) reduce cooling demand across sectors by 20% to 25% by 2037-38, (ii) reduce refrigerant demand by 25% to 30% by 2037-38, (iii) Reduce cooling energy requirements by 25% to 40% by 2037-38, (iv) recognize “cooling and related areas” as a thrust area of research under national S&T Programme, (v) training and certification of 100,000 servicing sector technicians by 2022-23, synergizing with Skill India Mission.

ICAP recommends synergies with ongoing government programmes and schemes such as Housing for All, the Smart Cities Mission, Doubling Farmers Income and Skill India Mission, in order to maximize socio-economic co-benefits. It was informed that the Ministry has constituted the Steering Committee and Thematic Working Groups for providing the modalities for operationalization of the recommendations. They have already commenced their work.

Shri Babul Supriyo further stated that as part of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) phase out programme, India has proactively taken the challenge of complete phase out of HCFC 141 b, which is a chemical used by foam manufacturing enterprises by 1.1.2020. Towards meeting this compliance target, the Ozone Cell of the Ministry is providing technical and financial assistance to foam manufacturing enterprises along with UNDP.

Shri Babul Supriyo informed the gathering that MoEFCC is implementing a project jointly for upskilling and certification of 100,000 Refrigeration and Air-conditioning service technicians with Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) under Skill India Mission - Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). Training and certification of Refrigeration and Air-conditioning (RAC) service technicians will allow securing environmental benefits and livelihood enhancement for technicians. This sector is largely unorganized. Already 20000 service technicians have been upskilled and certified in the first phase. In addition 14, 000 technicians have also been trained under HPMP in collaboration with GIZ. The Minister also released Proceedings of Stakeholder consultation on Strengthening of certification System for RAC servicing technicians and a Special issue of newsletter “newsTRAC” –for technicians in Refrigeration and Air-conditioning (RAC) Sector on Social Security, Access to Finance and Occupational Safety of Servicing Technicians.

The Ministry has also signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Central Institute of Plastics Engineering & Technology (CIPET), for providing Competency Enhancement of System Houses and Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs) in foam manufacturing sector for ensuring smooth and sustainable phase out of HCFC-141b.

A booklet on ‘Montreal Protocol – India’s Success Story’ and poster and sticker of award winning students were also released on the occasion of the World Ozone Day. In keeping with the focus on skilling of RAC service technicians and formalization of the RAC service trade four publications related to RAC service sector which have been developed by Ozone Cell, MoEF&CC along with GIZ and UN Environment were also launched today. A booklet on Efficient and Sustainable Cooling and a booklet on Good Servicing Practices for Flammable Refrigerants: A Quick Guide were also released on the occasion. Shri Babul Supriyo also presented awards to students for competitions in painting, poster making and slogan writing organized on World Ozone Day.

"32 years and healing" is the theme of 25th World Ozone Day celebrations. The theme signifies over three decades of remarkable international cooperation to protect the ozone layer and also the climate system under the Montreal Protocol. The abundance of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs) in the atmosphere is declining and a recent study has indicated that the ozone hole is recovering.

The World Ozone Day celebration was well attended by the representatives of Multilateral and bilateral agencies including UN Environment, UNDP, GIZ, representatives of various Government Departments, Industry and Industry associations and large number of students.

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